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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MEXICO 002922

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

NSC TO SENIOR DIRECTOR FOR WHA RESTREPO, WHA FOR DAS
ROBERTA JACOBSON, WHA FOR MEX DIRECTOR LEE AND STAFF

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/02/2019

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SUBJECT: GOM REMAINS CAUTIOUS ON HONDURAS

REF: 09MEXICO2339)

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Gustavo Delgado for Reasons
: 1.4 (b),(d)

¶1. (C) Summary. Mexico regards as hollow the threat by Honduras' de facto president, Roberto Micheletti, to suspend the diplomatic privileges of several states, including Mexico, if they continue to deny his government recognition. Nevertheless, the GOM is reluctant to inject the Rio Group, of which it is the current president, into the burgeoning controversy in Honduras, out of concern about a potential backlash for the Mexican diplomatic corps there. Mexico continues to look to the OAS to broker a solution to the crisis. End Summary.

¶2. (C) Jose Galvan Corona, Director for Central America at the Mexican Secretariat of Foreign Affairs (SRE), told Poloff on October 1 that Honduras' de facto president Roberto Micheletti had threatened to suspend the diplomatic privileges of Argentina, Mexico, Spain, and Venezuela September 27 in the hope that states would back off their unconditional call for the reinstatement of President Zelaya. However, Mexico regards this threat as a hollow tactic and did not believe that Micheletti would follow through. President Calderon recalled Mexico's Ambassador to Honduras on June 29, one day after the coup. However, the Mexican Embassy otherwise operates normally in Honduras. According to Galvan Corona, the GOM has developed no plans to suspend normal operations of its Embassy in Honduras or pull any personnel back to Mexico. FM Espinosa told the Mexican Congress on September 30 that under the Vienna Convention the Honduran Government is obligated to respect the immunity of diplomatic personal and property.

¶3. (C) Corona further remarked that the GOM continued to look to the OAS to assume the lead in producing a resolution to the crisis in Honduras. He noted an OAS delegation was scheduled to arrive in Honduras October 7, including OAS SYG Jose Miguel Insulza and Mexican Foreign Minister Espinosa (along with foreign ministers from Ecuador, El Salvador, Panama, and other high-level international representatives). Mexico saw this delegation assuming a key role in settling the stalemate between Micheletti and Zelaya. On October 7, FM Espinosa published an op-ed in El Universal that clearly lays out the GOM's support for the OAS process to resolve the crisis in Honduras.

¶4. (C) Separately, Colombian Embassy Officer told Poloff that she had attended an October 1 meeting of the Rio Group in Mexico City that dealt with Honduras. Mexico had previously issued a strong statement on September 23 in support of Honduran stability, Zelaya's reinstatement, and the role of

the OAS in mediation. However, a week later, following Micheletti's 9/29 threat, Monroy told Poloff that the GOM backed off a Rio Group statement that referenced Zelaya, despite considerable support from other member states. The result was a statement by the Rio Group that endorsed mediation by the OAS, but made no mention of Zelaya. Monroy was uncertain of the GOM's reasoning - it may have been because they believed such a public message could have interfered with the beginning of the OAS mediation mission over the weekend. Alternatively, they may have been concerned about the potential impact on their Embassy in Honduras.

15. (C) Since Michelleti took control of the Honduran Government June 28, Mexico has continued to recognize the Government of Zelaya and work closely with the Honduran Embassy in Mexico, which is headed by Zelaya-loyalist Rosalinda Bueso Asfuera. Bueso Asfuera sent Post (and other diplomatic missions) a dipnote September 25 requesting funds to assist in the upkeep of her Embassy during the stalemate in Honduras. (Note: Per WHA guidance, we will politely decline.) Bueso Asfuera told us that the Mexican Government was providing financial support to the Honduran Mission. SRE Director General for Central America and the Caribbean, Omar Hurtado Contreras denied this. He conceded to Poloff that that the SRE had received a solicitation from the Honduran Embassy, but said Mexico was not providing funding.

14. (C) Comment: Mexico appears relatively confident Honduras will continue to honor its obligations under the Vienna Convention and not lift the protections of the diplomatic community working in Honduras. At the same, it exhibited some reticence about having the Rio Group which it

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presently leads assume a higher profile on the matter. Instead, the GOM continues to look to the OAS to retain the lead for forging a solution to the political crisis there. Visit Mexico City's Classified Web Site at <http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/wha/mexicocity> and the North American Partnership Blog at <http://www.intelink.gov/communities/state/nap/>

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